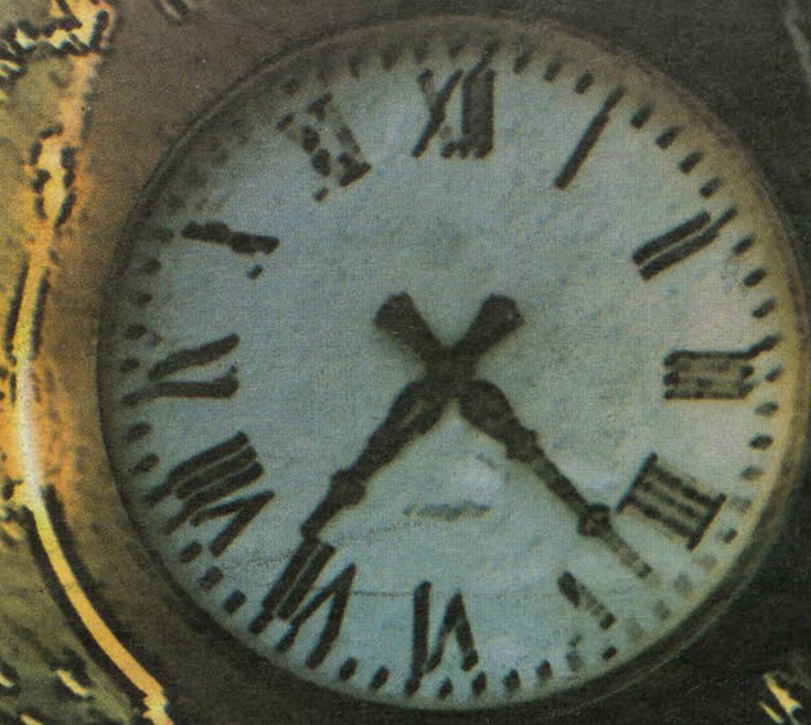


# *Where Did the Time Go?*



## **Commencement 2012**

Swan Songs: pages 2,3,6,7

Summa Cum Laude: pages 4,5



# Swan Songs 2012

By **Chris Slavin, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus**

Sadly, I've never been in a band. But I have a theory on what I see as the necessary mentality of people who play in bands — how I think they must understand themselves in relation to the rest of the band. Basically, I think each member of every successful band ever has felt lucky to be there — thinks that every person playing around him is just a little bit better of a musician than he is. How else could such creative and talented people have the patience or desire to work with someone else's ideas, to compromise? Mutual respect in creative processes, like making music and making a newspaper, is what makes those processes work best. My band analogy is how I've come to understand *The Cowl* and my contribution to it. For my final number, I'd like to thank my bandmates.

Thank you, Richy, for making it possible for me to do this job, the best one I've had yet. You kept me sane, mostly by simply being yourself, the very best person I've had the pleasure of meeting at college. The tamagotchi is blessed to have you, and I'm blessed to have gotten to work with you. Thanks for helping me see past the ice cubes.

Thank you, Steve Sears, for being my administrative brother. I know I made your job more difficult this year on a few occasions, but thank you for working with me. I meant what I wrote; this place is lucky to have you.

Thank you, Cath, for being the coolest girl I met at college. Your talent, hard work, and character made this year rewarding and fun. You're going to excel next year and following, and I hope your memories of late nights in the office are as fond as mine.

Thank you, Bill, for basically being my life partner this year. Cath's the coolest girl and you're the coolest dude (Braski's the coolest cat). You're an incredible artist and an incredible-er friend. When you take over Hollywood, I'll be able to tell people I slept four feet from you for an entire year.

Thank you, Myriad Pro, for being the sickest font.

Thank you, copy editors, for being our unsung heroes.

Thank you, Arman and Dara, for allowing me to hand this thing off to you with pride and the highest confidence. I encourage you both to embrace the opportunity, to continue to foster community, generate dialogue, embrace diversity, engage, open forum, discourse, community, diversity, respect, society, challenging, leadership roles, diversity. (BUZZZZZZZ.)

Thank you, Mich, Nangs, and Sokes, for sometimes being our moms and always being our friends.

Thank you, accounting majors, for still being cowards.

Thank you, Sara and Vaghs, for setting the bar high, teaching me the ways of the *Cowl* world, and being awesome in your own ways. I'm proud to be an EIC Emeritus because I'm in such good company.

Thank you, Jackie Kramer, for giving me a shot on the night that you had a few yourself.

Thank you, Ragecliffe, for being the best house and for putting up with the hell we put you through this year. (Special thanks to the four square feet of floor between the chairs and the TV where the N64 is.)

Finally, thank you, Derek, Nick, Vinny, Bill, Weisen, and Ewen, for making college what it was for me — truthfully the best four consecutive years I've had yet. You guys have been my best friends, my brothers, and what I'm going to miss most about college is simply not being able to hang out with you guys all the time. Thanks to you six, I have the very best memories of PC, my college years, D-Kart.

Each of your friendships means a great deal to me, and I am so looking forward to what our collective friendship is going to bring to all of our lives. Is there any other way for me to end it? "Let's rage."

I guess I have been in a band. Thank you, our audience, for listening to our music.

By **Catherine Northington, Associate Editor-in-Chief Emerita**

Four years ago, I didn't know what a cowl was. Or a *Cowl*, for that matter. I also didn't like beer, cried if I got below an A, and thought Civ sounded "really cool."

Four years was a long time ago.

I remember applying for *The Cowl* in 2008. Being a wiener, my collegiate ambitions were simple: 1) Write. 2) Avoid human contact.

*The Cowl* helped me with one of the two. What I didn't realize at the time was that signing up for Cowl—and eventually joining Ed Board—would bring me into human contact with some of the most zealous, diverse, and bizarre people on this campus (Exhibit A: Chris Tompkins '09, who had a gift for rapidly identifying and preying upon a person's weaknesses: "Catherine, why are you so quiet?" "HEY EVERYONE, why doesn't Catherine talk?" etc., etc.). It's been quite the social learning curve.

This paper is a gallery of freaks, geeks, and in-betweens. I mean that in the most loving way possible, as I am thrilled to be counted among their ranks. I'm still a wiener, but I'm convinced that this paper and the people on it have made me the best wiener I can be. Also, I talk now.

Over the past four years, *The Cowl* has done more than just give me a voice. It has informed my interests, taught me how to write, taught me how not to write, brought me motivation and self-worth, and of course, usurped my Wednesday nights. I wouldn't trade any of it.

My sincerest, most heartfelt thanks go to the following people and things for breathing energy and happiness into me at those times when I want to stuff my face into a pillow:

My unbelievable, weird, inspiring, eclectic set of best friends, who made me feel like part of a family in a way that I never dreamed was possible 300 miles away from everything I'd ever known or loved. I love you more than you all know, for letting me be the person I am, and for constantly making that person better. The memories forged at da Hive will live on long after the house itself succumbs to the daily wear and tear of Oakland gang fights, stabbings, and JWU kids throwing rocks through windows.

Helena. Our four years of glorious co-habitation was, as you so aptly put it, "the only thing this school got right." Think back to the day we met. Okay, now erase it from your memory forever, because it actually hurts to think about that palpable discomfort. We have grown so much together. It's sickeningly sweet.

Slavkid. You are hands-down the most helpful, enthusiastic, committed, and awesome person that I've ever had the pleasure of working with. I hope the success to which your dedication leads you compensates for the inevitable Mario Kart losing streak you will suffer as long as you continue racing with Toad.

Arman, for being there, always. Sometimes with soup.

My *Cowl* predecessors, who thrived on my freshman year bewilderment. You inadvertently gave me lessons on how to be a college student. Thank you for embracing me like the awkward, naïve pet I was, and for ultimately shaping the only-slightly-less awkward person I have become.

Vaghi, you in particular are a continual inspiration in the ragtag and sundry bumbblings of my life.

Richy Kless, who deserves every kind of medal ever awarded to anyone in the history of the world. Thank you, Richy, for being the exemplar of kindness, humility, and love from which so many, including myself, draw inspiration.

My professors, especially those in the English department, who made me feel like I could contribute—and convinced me that contributing was worth doing at all.

Professor deNiord, for being an exemplary professor and human being. I have learned so much from you about how to be a good person.

Matt, because you're considerably more than I was banking on when I arrived here.

My family, who consistently and dutifully love me, despite costing them massive amounts of money and pain. Don't worry, Mom and Dad: I'll make up for it with this lucrative English degree!

To present and future Cowlers, particularly Arman and Dara and the 2012-2013 Ed Board: You already know you rock, but go ahead and make sure everyone else knows it too. If you make me any prouder, I'll probably explode like Stay Puft.

My Many-Man Band





### By Max Widmer, Commentary Staff

I've never written an official acceptance speech before, and unless they're handing out trophies for "most-skipped-meteorology-classes," I probably never will. But there are too many people I need to thank right now for reasons I can't explain in 300 words. It's still worth a shot, regardless of how short it'll inevitably fall.

So here's to you, Brian and John, and whoever the hell picked my winning ticket in the freshmen year roommate lottery. We've come a long way from facebook chatting about who'll bring the Xbox and who'll bring the fridge.

And to all of the Grindhurst guys, because it's been a wild ride since 4 a.m.s in Guzman, and if I could have handpicked a group of friends, they wouldn't have held a candle to you.

And to you, Ann and Dot, because you made my day every Friday when you put your hands on my wrist and looked me straight in the eyes and told me how wonderful you thought my articles were.

And to you, Mom and Dad, because you paid for "the cruise ship that's coming to port," and made this all possible. I hope I'll always be your favorite writer.

And to you, Tommy Shea, for continuously reminding me to believe in myself.

And to you, Ben Almeda and Carlos Bueno, because some stories are worth telling and you let me in on yours.

And to you, Steve Sears. I still think that job belonged to you and I'll take that to the grave.

You, too, Richy Kless, because while there aren't any perfect role-models out there, you came pretty damn close.

And to The Friars Club, because you guys were the "meat and potatoes" of my PC experience.

And for you, Jake. Because death isn't so scary anymore.

And to the best proof-reader a guy could ever ask for. The only thing I'll miss more than this place is you.

And finally to every single one of you who flipped through this paper every week and gave my articles a chance.

They were never for me anyway.

### By Valerie Ferdon, News Editor Emeritus

Like most freshmen, the first semester of college was characterized by a series of fleeting emotions. There was the initial shock of being away from home for the first time, then the feeling of being completely overwhelmed by the fact that I knew absolutely no one. The only place in which I felt at ease was in the classroom, but at the end of the day, the distraction of books, lectures, and tests could not fulfill the basic human need for inclusion. As my first semester came to a close, I was almost certain I would be starting the transferring process in the spring.

Don't get me wrong,—I had friends. I went to basketball games. I went out. I did everything normal PC freshman are told to do in order to find happiness. What my experience was lacking was a sense of purpose, a healthy outlet, a facet for my creative energy. Something I was convinced did not exist at PC.

Then I found *The Cowl*. I was hired as a mere news reporter, joining the staff of almost 100 students who together worked toward the goal of producing a high-quality weekly publication. As time went on, I was given greater responsibilities: significant stories, the privilege of interviewing members of administration, and eventually, a position on Ed Board.

It was through investigating and reporting the happenings at PC that I began to fall in love with PC. Student-interest pieces shed light upon the unbelievable accomplishments of my classmates. Professor spotlights reiterated the value of my education. Articles that delved into the details of campus crime and Security's responses made me feel safer. Student Congress coverage highlighted the legislation that often went unacknowledged. Even the controversial policy pieces helped me to recognize the Administration's genuine intent to better student life. *The Cowl* helped me see the beauty of PC in all of its intricacies: the things that go unnoticed, but that help define this unique four-year experience.

Of course, there have been times when *The Cowl* was the only thing that I wholeheartedly hated about PC. Inter-office drama, including petty arguments over what article would lead on the front page, or struggling to find the correct spelling of an administrator's name. *The Cowl* is also an easy target for criticism—some warranted, but much of it unwarranted—and many days it felt like I was walking on eggshells across campus.

As I conclude my final *Cowl* article, I would like to thank Christine Rousselle, my assistant-turned-friend, whose help enabled me to keep my sanity throughout the course of this year. And to the future of this newspaper, my only hope is that *The Cowl* as an institution will continue to deliver unbiased news to the student body and uphold the highest journalistic integrity. Farewell.

### By Christina Zupich, Copy Editor Emeritus

Three years and eight months ago, to the day, I sat in Meagher 416 bawling my sorry eyes out. It was my first night at college, and my roommates had instantly bonded with others on our floor and gone out for the evening; not wanting to be the awkward tag-along, I had mumbled something about wanting to unpack and stayed behind. And I was fine, really. Until my parents called. And then I put on Michael Bublé's "Home" and let it all out.

If you had told me then that I'd be sitting on that same pink comforter two weeks from graduating, dangerously close to tears at the mere prospect of having to write this, I would never have believed you. In fact, I probably would have laughed.

My *Cowl* love may well come as a surprise to those reading this, as this week's issue is in fact my first—and last—time being published. Some say the life of a copy editor is too often overlooked and underappreciated, but even though I've never before had my authorship stamped on an article, I know that I have played an important role in the final outcome of each issue that has been splayed out across our table. And truth be told, I don't think I could have been happier these past three years.

I'm quickly learning, though, that of all the emotions that come with writing a swan song, gratitude rises to the top awfully quickly. I'm grateful for the upperclassmen who so warmly and unhesitatingly welcomed me into their family and took me under their wing my sophomore year. I'm grateful for the underclassmen who have eagerly risen to the occasion these past few weeks, making me realize that I have absolutely no reason to worry for the future of *The Cowl*. I'm grateful for the Quote Pipe, Post-It note games, late-night runs to McPhail's for water and popcorn, intense debates over comma placement and word choice, too many laughs that we could never explain, and amazing conversations with amazing people on the widest range of topics imaginable.

Most of all, though, I am grateful for every single person who has made these past three years everything that they have been to me. I know they say you can't have it all, but at the risk of sounding irritatingly rhapsodic, I think we came pretty damn close.

Thank You.

### By Kelly Dorwin, Head Copy Editor Emeritus

Since my sophomore year at Providence College, I have worked as a copy editor on our student newspaper. It's probable that most of you don't recognize my name or writing style, and that's because my job entails a lot of behind-the-scenes work. Every week, I sit at a big, wooden table in the middle of the office and read the paper from cover to cover, looking for grammatical errors and making suggestions with my trusty green pen. I don't get to open the newspaper on Thursdays and search excitedly for my own published articles or artwork. But when I see how polished the final product looks after my ideas have been implemented, it makes me feel just as pleased.

I remember stepping into the office for the first time when I was only 19 years old, as paper airplanes flew over my head, music blasted from a nearby computer, and people were gunning for boxes of pizza as if they hadn't eaten in days. What got me completely hooked, though, was the way that all the editors interacted with each other — comfortably discussing school work or books or movies while scarfing down dinner around the center table — the copy editor's table — as if they were a family. And the minute I sat down with them, I was accepted without hesitation.

Over the years, I've seen this moment play out again, but from the opposite perspective, as I've welcomed new faces into our crazy office home. I now consider the copy editor's table to be my own personal time machine, because every memory I have of the *Cowl* comes from the perspective of one of those gray wheelie chairs that surround the clunky table: the countless meals with fellow editors, Ed Board meetings, homework cram sessions, and Round the Circle games with my copy editing staff. This table has become the sun in my *Cowl* universe, around which everyone in the office revolves and occasionally gravitates. Who would have thought that a simple piece of furniture would play such a huge part in my college career? But if not for that impossible-to-ignore table that takes up half the room, I may never have gotten to know any of the creative and inspiring visionaries that work for our esteemed paper.

And now all I have left to say to them — the writers and editors that have become my friends — is thank you. Thank you all for coming to the table — for sharing your opinions, experiences, and dreams — because not getting to know you would have been a grave mistake. You have made Wednesday nights the best part of my week. I look forward to reading the *Cowl* next year without that infamous green pen in hand — as an alumna.

### By Bobby Bretz, Portfolio Staff Emeritus

We come to college to get an education, but it's more than an academic one. Years from now I won't long for those moments I spent inside classrooms on windy afternoons in early fall. I won't miss those nights I spent doing homework, ambushed by the sunrise when it sneaked in to watch me finish. There are times when we are so absorbed in our work that we forget the 4,000 people we live here with even exist.

Those aren't the things I'll care to remember. That isn't the whole education. It's the sunny days I spent exploring the East Side. It's golfing with roommates after class. It's all those crazy little adventures I made out of nothing with my friends, it is my friends—these are the things I'm taking with me. These are the things that aren't factored into tuition, thank God, because they are worth more than a lifetime of lab fees and dinner plans.

It's the professors who really made me think. It's the questions I took with me, the ones I'll be asking for years to come. It's the core requirements that somehow inspired me, the major courses that made me feel I really know something valuable, and the ones that reminded me that I barely know anything at all. It's not the papers I put off and tediously labored upon, but the ones I delved into and loved to write.

It's coming into a new place alone and unsure of myself, and walking out of it with four years full of stories and inspirations and learning from my mistakes. It's figuring out who I am and who I want to become. It's the unfamiliar people who became my best friends. It's my determination to make sure those people stay that way forever.

If I tell you years from now that Providence College gave me a comprehensive education, it will be the understatement to end all understatements. My transcript will tell you how I spent 10 percent of the last four years. How can I convey what the other 90 percent of that time has meant to me? My education here has largely been concerned with life. Who will I be in this situation? How can I be a morally good person? What is the right amount of humor and gravitas with which to go about my day? I don't know any of these things, but I wouldn't have the slightest hope of figuring them out had I never come here.

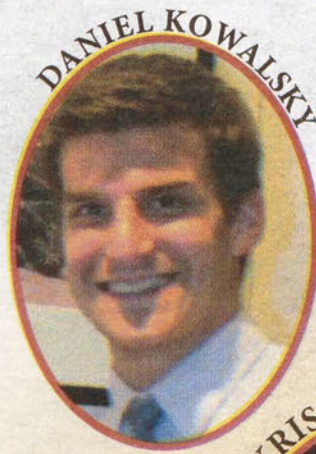
I've learned so much that is meaningful and have made so many meaningful relationships here that it is hard to see graduating (read: being forced to leave) as a privilege, something that I somehow deserve. But I see that what comes after is part of the education, too—that for the rest of my life, I will continue to receive a Providence College education, as I apply what I've learned here to the wide world and learn more as a result. I will continue to foster the friendships I made here, and will make even more in the future thanks to this education. This is what I'm taking with me, enough so that I'll never really leave here. You can take the Friar out of PC, but you can't take PC out of the Friar.



# SUMMA CUM LAUDE



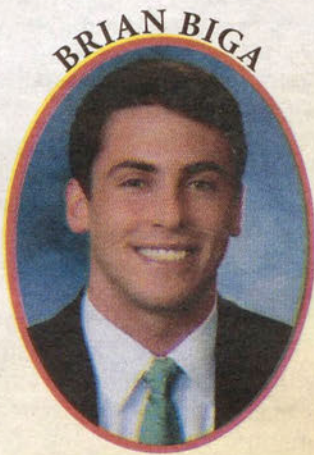
HANNAH MORIGGI



DANIEL KOWALSKY



ELIZABETH MOORE



BRIAN BIGA



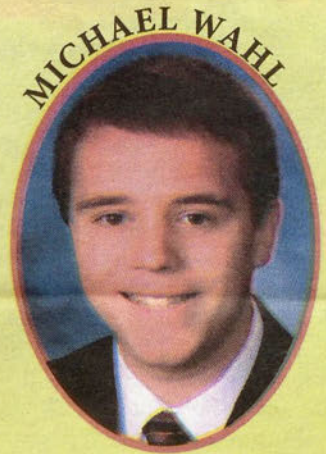
KRISTEN MAIETTA



ANA-MARIA SIMA



KELLY BRANHAM



MICHAEL WAHL



GARRETT LOCKE



BOBBY BRETZ



SKYE HAWKINS



SHANNON HYLE



LAUREN WENTWORTH

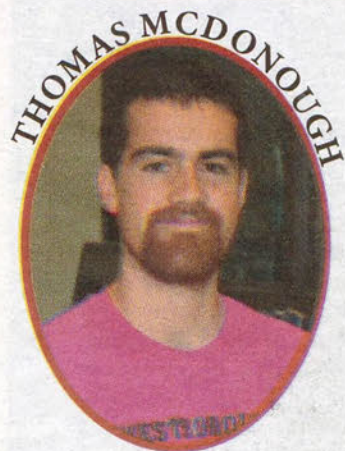


MARC CAPUANO

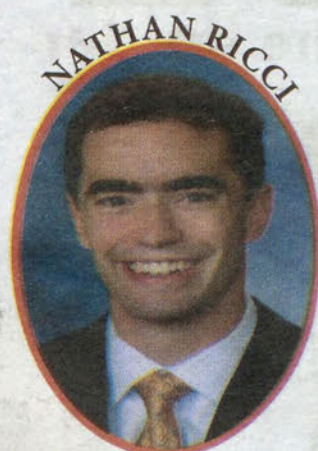


ERICA DEVINE





2012



VERITAS



**Notice  
the  
eras:**

**the older  
you grow**

**the bolder**

**they're  
shown**

**like post-it  
notes**

**stuck at**

**moments**

**of  
growth.**

**NEVER**

**forget  
the  
times**

**that touched you**

**the  
M  
O  
S  
T**

**Thank you for a great ride  
Love you all. Billy Nawrocki, Photo Editor**

**By Tom Nailor, Portfolio Staff Emeritus**

The movie *The King's Speech* centers on King George VI (played by Colin Firth), who struggled with a stammer. At one point during the movie, without giving too much away, Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue asks Colin Firth's character why he should listen to him, and Firth replies emphatically, "Because I have a voice," his stutter noticeably absent.

When I arrived at Providence College, and still today, I doubt that anyone would accuse me of being too quiet—as my friends describe it, my brain works like a library with a very tired librarian constantly running around it. When someone says something, tells a story, makes a joke, quotes a movie, my brain kicks into overdrive and that little librarian runs off to find something related to the topic at hand. Hence why I so often say, "Speaking of..." and follow it with a story of my own. Still, so often my librarian makes connections and leaps that seem *non-sequiturs*, and I often find myself telling a story that might not seem at all to have to do with what we're talking about. I am rarely found speechless, and as friends pointed out to me on the recent SHEPARD Day of Silence, I am never quiet.

Still, the spoken word is only one type of voice, and if studying English and Psychology here at Providence has shown me anything about humanity, there is often a disconnect between what we say and what we do, what we claim and what we actually think. That is not to say I have been living a lie—this is not the time nor place for a sudden removal of masks, a revealing of intention, or declarations of insanity. But the point stands: So often what we say or do does not really match up with what we are thinking, how we are actually feeling, what we actually desire. These things that we truly want, desire, believe, are so often frustrated by what we feel compelled to say or do because of outside forces, whether fear of reprisal, embarrassment, misunderstanding, or inability.

Over the years, I've written essays criticizing the foolishness of automatic paper towel dispensers and about why we all love Pokémon. I've written stories about boxers, about actors, about seagulls, and oftentimes they are actually stories about fathers and sons, about embarrassment, about religious hypocrisy. I've written poems about Pontius Pilate, siren songs, people on the train, peach pits, Church auctions, giraffes, each more often than not more revealing of myself than anything else. I have not published every piece I've ever written in *The Cowl*, nor has what I've published always been my best. But it has been my own, and it has been as honest as I can make it. So, if the Lionel Logue in my own life (I am sure that there is one, and I am sure that he knows who he is) were to ask me "Why should I listen to you?" I would say you should not—you should read me. And why should you read me? Because I have a voice.

I thank *The Cowl* for giving me the space to speak and to share my voice. I thank members of the Portfolio Section, past and present, editors and writers, for sharing their own voices with the Providence College community, and myself and for making it a wonderful four years. And I thank you, reader, for doing just what you are doing now: reading, and enjoying each author's voice.

**By Meghan Conway, Webmaster**

As a determined yet hesitant freshman Cowler I can remember sucking in a giant gulp of air each time I cornered McPhail's, heading towards what used to be the beloved *Cowl* office. Hugging my maroon FiveStar notebook tightly to my Friar gear decorated chest and giving myself a little "you got this" pep talk; I'd stride into the office on Tuesday and Wednesday nights, at least ten minutes early. As welcoming as *The Cowl* office always was, I felt intimidated by the Editorial board's strong presence and opinions. More than this though, I admired their creativity and envied the bonds they shared with each other. In my desire to work as hard as they did and build friendships like theirs, I questioned whether I would ever be part of something so grand. Now with four years of reporting campus news, webmastering on Thursdays, and bonding with fellow Cowlers late into the night behind me, here I am, that *Cowl* senior I so longed to be. Friends I may never have made outside *The Cowl* office surround me, I'm seasoned as a writer and web editor, and filled with experience and memories that will drive me forward into the next steps of life.

In my last weeks as a Cowler, I find myself stumbling into the office, with a hop in my step, with a pen in my lucky, and at least ten minutes late. It's funny how as soon as you really come to know something, come to excel in something, or come to be someone you wanted to be, it's time to move on. With my days as a Providence College student rapidly dwindling I feel happier than ever to be here, and more prepared than ever to be somewhere else. It goes without saying, that bidding farewell to PC and getting tossed into the unknown, a world without Ray brunch and Tiffany & Earl, is terrifying, but when I think of that anxious yet eager girl trekking from Dore Hall to the *Cowl* Office on a snowy February night for a staff meeting, I'm reassured that while new beginnings are daunting, we'll all find a place we fit in. For all you freshman approaching your second year as a Friar, if you haven't found that place yet, you will.

**By Dennis Lynch, News Staff Emeritus**

I've been a member of *The Cowl* for less than a year, so this swan song may be a bit less emotionally stirring than those of my more experienced colleagues, who have put countless hours into bringing you this newspaper over the past year and for the majority of their college careers. I'd like to thank them for their hard work in creating this newspaper each week, from Chris and Catherine, the Editor and Associate Editor in Chief, to the Editors of each section, especially Valerie and Christine for putting up with my shenanigans this year. They leave *The Cowl* in the capable hands of Arman and Dara, as well as the rest of the new batch of editors.

In my short time on *The Cowl* I have had the privilege to cover a wide variety of stories. These range from amusing happenings on campus such as the lacrosse team's off-season yoga workout, to heartbreaking tragedies such as the loss of Sgt. Dorley in late April, to the largely unremarkable meetings of Student Congress that I was assigned to as punishment for my shenanigans. Thank you to anyone who read an article and especially those who mentioned one to me, as it often feels that nothing I write gets read (I wouldn't read most of them either).

These four years have been a great time in my life. I'll look back fondly on the friends I have made and the absurdity of some of the things we've done, such as spending the better part of a Friday night and Saturday morning building an altar for a mock wedding that would have been burned if someone hadn't stolen it first (Still looking for you. That altar was my greatest accomplishment at this school).

I've always bought into Mark Twain's advice to not let your schooling interfere with your education, and I think that most of us were successful in this regard. Good luck to the senior class. Underclassmen, enjoy the rest of your time here.

**By Kelly Smith, World Staff Emeritus**

If you are reading this, it means I have passed my biology class and will, in fact, be graduating from Providence College. I spent approximately seven months on *The Cowl* and perhaps this is some kind of new record. During that time, I used the puzzles as an outlet for my terrible (beautiful) need to pun. I would like to give a shout out to discoveryeducation.com and to a drunken 412 rant to Arman and Catherine about my love for crosswords, both without which, the puzzles would not exist. And also to Anderson Cooper because he deserves it.

Since I went to one meeting for the *Cowl* (and it turns out it was for the *Scowl*), I decided I would rather share some insight on making the most out of Providence College: Eat a lot of Big Tony's, they only deliver so far. Professors are human beings who have lived life, so go talk to them. It's never too late to join a club. Ray brunch is the best. Go see all the creative work people on this campus do because you owe it to yourself. Do your homework, but you'll remember the nights you spent hanging out more. Be nice to everyone. Especially the people who clean your building. Go to McPhails on a Friday afternoon. Don't drop things from the second story of your house, it is mean and terrifying. Go out. Read Aristotle the first time around, because you'll probably read him more than once. Find one new friend every semester that's worth keeping. The hill next to Moore is a great place to look at the stars.

There is no such thing as a swan song, just like there is no such thing as a farewell tour for Cher. But both are nice in the sentiment that they are willing to admit there is another phase coming. Whether we met or not, thanks for making my time at PC worthwhile.



### By Alexis Smith, Web Staff Emeritus

It has been such an amazing four years at this incredible institution. With so many experiences my time on *The Cowl* has been the best of all. After writing for the sports section for four years I have seen a side of PC that not many people get to see. The most prominent was seeing the personalities of athletes and coaches. I have covered the games of the swimming and diving team and the men's ice hockey team, but I have met players from the tennis, field hockey, and the lacrosse team as well. I am not going to paint them all in a pretty picture, but the ones that I encountered were completely different from the rumors I was hearing on campus in my freshman year. There is so much I can say about the athletic department from how their athletes treated me during an interview to the people behind the desks helping me find a job. I have had an incredible experience meeting so many people who work in the athletic department. I hear too often that people think the athletics department is unapproachable. It is not true, you just have to get the courage to say hi. I owe my incredible four years to all the people I have met, athletes and non-athletes. I owe Coach Leaman a huge thank you for sitting down with me every week to answer my looming questions about the hockey team's previous games. I also want to send a thank you to the few hockey players I would text last minute when I needed an extra quote or two for my article. I also have to thank the swim team for putting up with me when I had no idea what I was doing when I started writing for *The Cowl* and asking every question I could think of because I didn't know the right ones to ask. Even though I have had such an amazing experience with athletics I had an even better one with the people on the sports staff. My first two editors taught me so much and have helped me so much since. I also met my lovely radio partner who I will continue to keep close to my heart. And last but not least *The Cowl* brought me so much closer to my roommate who joined it with me and for that I will be forever grateful. *The Cowl* has given me so much, and I will forever owe it for that. It put incredible people into my life and gave me experiences I would have never had otherwise. Thank you *Cowl*.

### By Kerry Vaughan, Commentary Staff Emeritus

Since this is meant to be a song, I figure there should be some music. And not just any music will do. If you're going to read this, you're going to have to simultaneously listen to quite possibly the most triumphant song in all of movie history: the theme song from *Rudy*. Now, I realize that my story is not nearly as compelling as Rudy's. I didn't grow up in Illinois, work at a steel mill, leave home on a whim to fulfill my longtime dream of playing football for the Fighting Irish, get accepted into Notre Dame, befriend a groundskeeper who gave me life-altering advice and opportunities, and walk onto the football team, only to eventually get an entire stadium's-worth of people to chant my name. In fact, I'm pretty sure the only thing Rudy Ruettiger and I have in common is that we both attended expensive Catholic colleges. Nonetheless, listen to the song—or this song, if you will.

I once said there are three things a writer can be met with: indifference, love, or hate. As a Commentary writer of nearly two-and-a-half years, I've been met with all three of those things, and I am forever grateful for that. So, to those who loved, to those who hated, and to those who I bored to tears with my writing—thank you for listening. And to *The Cowl*, for giving a shy kid like me a voice, thank you—it's been a blast.

During my first class at PC, my calculus professor said: You're going to meet some of your best friends here. She was right. To my professors, thank you for leaving me with lessons that I will never forget. Thank you for challenging me. To my parents, thank you for having it in your hearts and in your wallets to send me to a private school that has become a second home for me. To my little brother, good luck at the state school you'll more than likely be attending in a few years. To anyone who's helped me get through my four years as a biology major, thank you. And finally, to my best friends, thank you for changing my life.

I grew up in New Jersey, got accepted into Providence College, left home to see if I could make it as a Friar, befriended a number of people who gave me life-altering advice and opportunities, joined *The Cowl*, and well, I'm still working on getting an entire stadium's worth of people to chant my name. But it'll happen. After all, as a friend once told Rudy: "having dreams is what makes life tolerable." Keep dreaming, PC.

### By Jenn DiPirro, Commentary Editor Emeritus

Recently, I have found myself sitting and doing nothing a lot more. I sit on benches outside of the library, the front staircase of Accinno, and the Huxley wall just to stare and take mental photographs of this place I have called home for the past four years. The thing I am going to miss most about being a member of this community is actually being here physically. When you are busy, you take for granted the beauty of this place, so lately I have been trying to notice it more.

My PC is a spring day on the quad. My PC is viewing CyberFriar as a challenge comparable to winning a race on *Mario Kart*. My PC is a five dollar red-cup full of foamy Natty Ice. My PC is Hollywood telling me to hurry up. My PC is the sound of the St. Pius church bells on a crisp fall day. My PC is a Golden Crust Pizza at 2 a.m. on a Saturday. My PC is getting lost in Harkins as a senior. My PC is being saved from the cold by Mika's shuttle. My PC is laughing when they tried to call the C-Store anything but the C-Store. My PC is finding myself in a torrential downpour without a hood. My PC is a fountain soda from Alumni. My PC is watching the first snowfall from a booth in Ray. My PC is sitting in Aquinas lounge and feeling like I'm studying wizardry at Hogwarts. My PC is forgetting my mailbox combination. My PC is leaving the library to call my mom on the cold, stone benches. My PC is being nervous to take someone's stuff out of the drier. My PC is being stuffed into the Louie's bathroom with four friends. My PC is walking all the way to Slavin for the ATM. My PC is going to class and seeing 10 people I know on the way. My PC is all of you.

As a freshman, you think you have plenty of time. You tell yourself, "Next semester I will finally get that radio show I have always wanted." I wish I had known to tell myself to make those things happen then and now. Sophomore year is your second time around. You set high expectations for your second golf party, your second Halloween, and all of the other annual events that we cherish at PC. Sometimes your expectations are not met. I wish I had known to tell myself to not have expectations because then you will never be disappointed. Junior year is when the stress really comes and the college that they warned you about in high school becomes a reality. You start to question your strengths, but then you pleasantly surprise yourself. I wish I had told myself to have more faith and to live in the moment.

At the beginning of senior year you are so busy that you forget it is your last year and then all of a sudden it is second semester. You are terrified because it is almost time to leave this bubble and be a real person. I wish I could tell myself that the future is all figured out, but it's not. My *veritas*, or my truth, as I am starting to learn, is that we will never have it all figured out. I hope you find your *veritas* while you are in Friartown as well.

Special thanks to *The Cowl*, WDOM, Dance Club, Cunningham 602, Cunningham 304, and Cunningham 501, and my unbelievable family for always letting me be me and for putting up with my not-so-humble opinions!

### By Margaret Barresi, Portfolio Staff Emeritus

I wanted to be a big girl. I graduated from high school. I wanted to go to college. I came to Providence. I wanted to study. I declared a major in Biology. I wanted to move away from home. I lived on the 10th floor of McVinney. I wanted to try cafeteria food. I discovered Ray brunch. I wanted school spirit. I stormed the court when we beat Pitt. I wanted an Intramural Championship shirt. I was the captain of a winning kickball team. I wanted to get involved. I told kids to come here as an Admissions Ambassador. I wanted to have fun. I shimmied like Beyonce in Dance Club. I wanted to travel. I went on a service trip to the Dominican Republic. I wanted to share my ideas and feelings. I wrote for *The Cowl*. I wanted to dance. I discovered the stage at McPhails. I wanted to find friends. I met the people who lit up my life. I wanted to laugh till my stomach ached. They made me smile everyday. I wanted to cry when things hurt. They caught my tears. I wanted to feel good about myself. They told me I was beautiful inside and out. I wanted to try new things. We made a senior year bucket list (and checked off everything on it). I wanted to be lazy. We stayed in our pajamas and watched movies instead of doing homework. I wanted to go shopping. We went to the Providence Place Mall,— all the time. I wanted to remember summertime. We went to the beach instead of going to class. I wanted an adventure. We drove around Providence looking for new coffee shops. I wanted to sing. We were always loud and never in tune. I wanted to eat. We made pancakes for dinner. I wanted to change. Providence gave me the shape of a smarter, more mature person. I wanted to learn. Providence taught me how to be kind, compassionate, and classy. I wanted to grow. Providence lifted me up on its shoulders. I wanted to be inspired. Providence gave me the passion to pursue what makes me happy. I wanted to dream. Providence gave me a star to reach for. I wanted to love. Providence made me love myself and all those who have touched my life. I wanted to feel lucky. Providence made me realize how blessed I am. I wanted to think. Providence challenged me to defend what I believe in and question what I didn't. I wanted to belong. Providence gave me a family. I wanted to imagine. Providence gave me the freedom to spark my creativity. I wanted to be independent. Providence gave me the confidence to make my own choices. I wanted to be successful. Providence gave me a candle to light the way. I wanted to grow up. Providence made me a woman. I wanted to have it all. Providence gave me everything. I want to remember. I'll never forget.

### By Meg O'Neill, Sports Staff Emeritus

My last song, huh? There seems to be a lot of 'lasts' in 2012 for me — my last semester as an undergrad; currently in my last week of classes; just had my last lab practical (thanks to all that is good and pure); last week of finals coming up; last Clam Jam; last Spring Concert; the list can go on and on. As my time at Providence College is coming to a close I can only really think about the 'firsts' to block out the 'lasts.'

Now, in the first week of May, 2012, the fall of 2008 seems like decades ago, but really only yesterday at the same time. It feels as though I just moved into McVinney 911 with Kristen Borowiec. It seems like I just had my first Thursday night at Club Phil...who am I kidding — FishCo. Didn't we just storm the court after overturning #1 Pitt? (Cooley, I expect many more court storms in the future for the Friars!) Getting excited for Ray brunch (shout-out to the omelet line) does not seem like so long ago. I just received my 'Done With Civ' shirt, right? Did I not just go to JRW and get more action from security than a crowded Clubbies dance floor? How the heck — and heck is not nearly strong enough a word — am I graduating?

Living off-campus as a senior gives you a glimpse into the world post-PC. Walking past the quad on a spring day, dodging Frisbees and accidentally knocking over LaSalle cups, makes Eaton seem like it is in another city. Listening to underclassmen in Slavin talk about their RA's or what they are going to get in their Take-3 (I still do not know what that is. Thanks, Sodexo) can only pull on your heart strings for simpler times.

"I want more time!" I feel like I have been screaming that every day of this year. But, Robin Williams as the Genie has yet to show up to grant my wish. My time is up in fewer than three weeks. As much as my fingers hated to type that, it is true. It is time to say my goodbyes.

To *The Cowl*: Thank you for providing me with an outlet to express myself. The Sports section has treated me well these past two years. Every interview with every player and coach will be remembered. It was a privilege to share their thoughts and outlooks with the PC community.

To my roommates: Thank you for giving me your friendship the past four years. Your companionship has given me something to be thankful for every day and I consider myself one of the luckiest students at PC because of that. You have given me strength and continue to guide me as we take the next steps on this journey of life. You girls and the boys of 146 Pembroke inhabit every one of my PC memories.

To my fellow seniors: Take it in. This is it. Do something you haven't done yet on this campus. Do not regret sitting in your room when there are memories to be made. Go out on a Wednesday because you can. Talk to someone you met freshman year but have not spoken to since. Tell your fellow Friars what they mean to you. College has been the best four years of our lives — let's go out with a bang.

To the underclassmen: You're moving up. No longer are you the lowest men on the totem pole. My advice to you is to hate me for that comment. Do not consider yourselves inferior or not old enough to get involved on this campus. Get involved with whatever interests you. Make your voice heard. Make mistakes. Make memories. Do not regret a single decision you make while here at Providence. My only hope is that you love this place as much as I do when you are awake at 2am in May 2013, 2014, or 2015, wondering how it went by so fast.

To Providence College: Thank you. Thank you for making me this passionate, driven, eager, crazy individual who cannot wait to make an impact outside of PC. I will always be a Friar.

In the words of Nicholas Sparks, "This is not goodbye, my darling. This is a thank you." Thank you, PC, for everything.



